

Richard E. D'Aquin, Chair

William T. Roberts, Jr., Vice Chair

Roland M. Toups, Secretary

E. Joseph Savoie
Commissioner of Higher Education



BOARD OF REGENTS

*150 Third Street, Suite 129
Baton Rouge, LA 70801-1389
Phone (225) 342-4253
FAX (225) 342-9318
www.regents.state.la.us*

*William "Billy" Blake
Scott O. Brame
Reggie Dupré
Frances T. Henry
Robert Levy
William A. Oliver
Virgil Robinson, Jr.
Norbert A. Simmons
William Clifford Smith
Pat A. Strong
Artis L. Terrell, Jr.
Steve Johnson
Student Member*

March 21, 2002

Contact: Kim Hunter Reed

BOARD OF REGENTS APPROVES NEW ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

The Board of Regents today (March 21) gave approval to new alternative teacher certification programs throughout the state. These programs are designed to address the state's teacher shortage by recruiting college graduates into fast-track teacher preparation programs that will prepare them for the classroom.

"We are very pleased with the campuses involved in this redesign process. The alternative certification programs offer an aggressive response to the inadequate number of certified teachers in Louisiana's classrooms. The implementation of these programs will make a positive difference," said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie.

The programs approved today by the Regents include:

Grambling State University- Practitioner Teacher Program (Grades 1-6, 4-8, 7-12) and mild/moderated special education

Louisiana Tech University - Practitioner Teacher Program (Grades 1-6, 4-8, 7-12) and Master's Degree alternative track (Grades preK - 3, 1-6, 4-8, 7-12) and mild/moderate special education

McNeese State University - Master's Degree alternative track (Grades 1-6, 7-12) and mild/moderate special education

Nicholls State University - Practitioner Teacher Program (Grades 1-6, 4-8, 7-12) and mild/moderate special education

Northwestern State University - Practitioner Teacher Program (Grades 1-6, 4-8, 7-12) and mild/moderate special education and Master's Degree alternative track (Grades 1-6, 4-8 and 7-12)

(more)

ADD ONE REGENTS APPROVE TEN PROGRAMS

Southeastern Louisiana University - Master's Degree alternative track (Grades 1-6, 7-12) and mild/moderate special education

University of Louisiana-Lafayette - Practitioner Teacher Program (Grades 7-12) and mild/moderate special education

Centenary College - Master's Degree alternative track (Grades 1-6 and 7-12)

Loyola University - Master's Degree alternative track (Grades 1-6 and 7-12), and

Xavier University - Practitioner Teacher Program (Grades 7-12 - Science and Math) and mild/moderate special education and Master's Degree alternative track (Grades 1-6, 7-12) and mild/moderate special education.

Last month, the Board of Regents approved the alternative certification programs at the University of Louisiana at Monroe and Louisiana College. Additional programs are expected to be approved next month.

All Colleges of Education submitted redesigned teacher preparation programs for external review in November. Approved programs will be reviewed by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for their endorsement. Once this process is complete, approved campuses can begin recruiting students into the programs which will begin in July.

Board members also discussed the teacher accountability system which is required by the Higher Education Act of 1998. In order to comply with the federal legislation, the Regents must inform the federal government of all low-performing and at-risk colleges of education in the state. This year institution's passage rates on the teacher certification examination (PRAXIS) will be used as the first factor in an overall assessment of the quality of teacher education programs. Grades will be assigned to passage rates by April 8 and listed on the Board of Regents' web site. While this action will comply with federal mandates, Louisiana has decided to go well beyond federal requirements and evaluate several other elements in quality teacher preparation and assign additional labels of performance over the next few years.

When asked why Louisiana would self impose standards beyond federal requirements, Savoie replied, "It's simple - We are very serious about improving education."